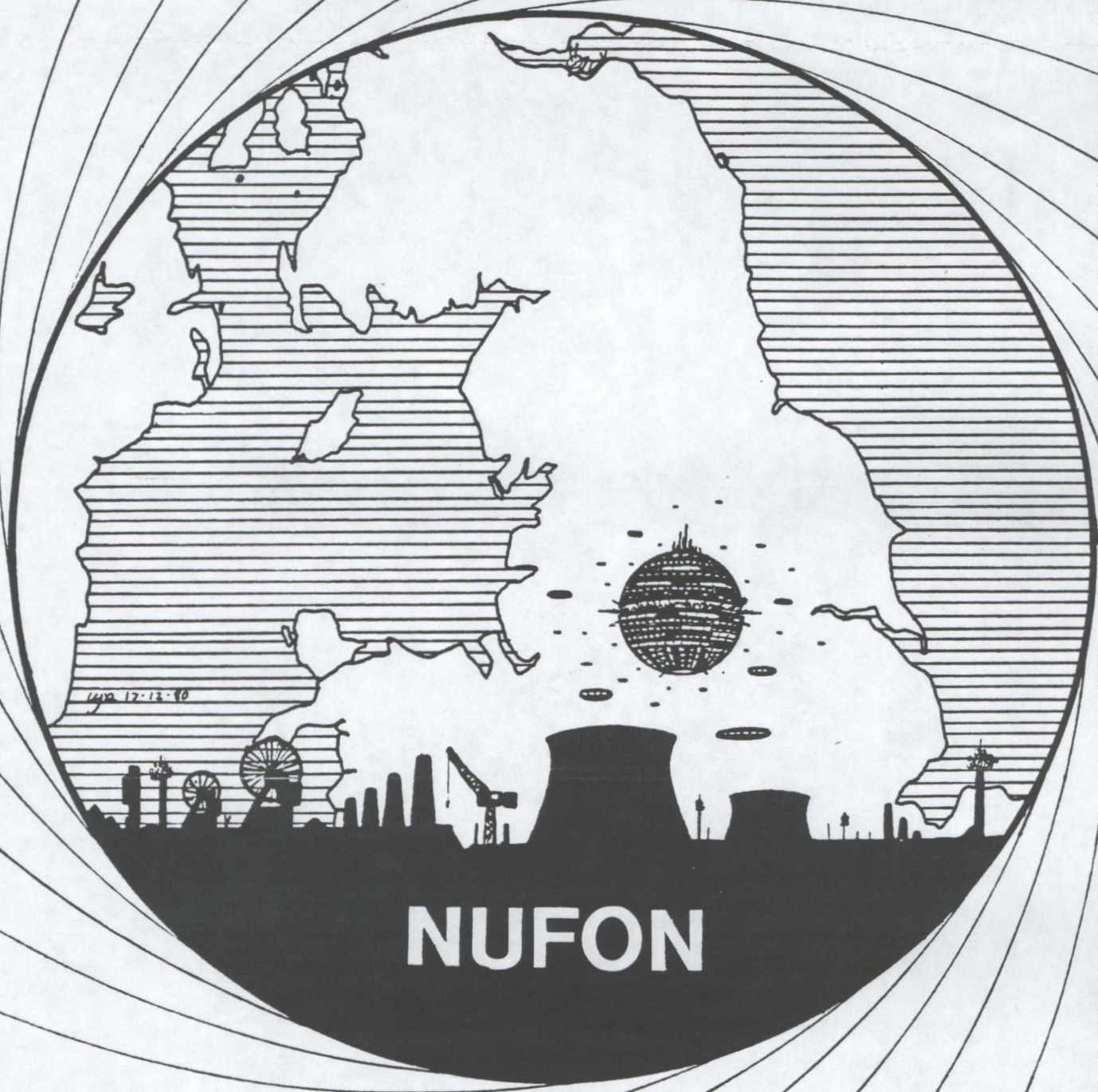


NORTHERN UFO NETWORK



NORTHERN UFO NEWS is published monthly (in series with NUFON CASE HISTORIES)
 by the Northern UFO Network (NUFON) Editorial Address :-
 8 Whitethroat Walk Birchwood Warrington Cheshire WA3 6PQ
 Editor: JENNY RANGLES (MUDORA) Cover Design: JOHN WATSON (CHRYISIS)
 1982 Subscription rate £2.80 (£4.20 with CASE HISTORIES)

NOVEMBER 1982

ISSUE 98

It is hoped that from January 1983 we may be able to litho produce this magazine but it will totally depend upon the subscription rate. If you want to see NUN grow better please resubscribe NOW, and tell your friends. There will be a single rate for all 1983 issues of £4.20 (no increase you will note)...JR

EDITORIAL: "Glimmers of light on the HORIZON"

Monday, October 18 1982 was an important day for the UFO subject. It saw the first screening of the long-awaited BBC-2 HORIZON documentary, 'The Case of the UFOs'. Of course, being a full-time ufologist I could be forgiven for expecting too much. But I knew from producer/writer John Groom we could not expect too much. There was never any doubt which side of the sceptic/believer fence his programme would lie. Yet, in the end, I was both rather surprised (relieved?) and yet vaguely dis-satisfied.

I found myself agreeing with practically every word spoken during the transmission, even getting a feeling of déjà vu at points, thinking... "I could have written that" before realising later that I had! (Somewhere or other). But it was all very well effectively destroying the 'UFOs are spaceships' myth, and in the process showing just how much of our subject is dross. Those of us who care deeply about the subject know that and applaud a serious attempt to "clear away the clutter of belief" (as I called it in UFO STUDY). The public needs educating, and this effort adds to the spate of sensible books we have had in recent years. The effect is beginning to tell. It may not be coincidence that we are receiving fewer and fewer reports. HORIZON did this job extremely well. Indeed, quite probably, it did it too well.

Groom put an enormous effort into proving the view that the subject is a modern social fantasy, which up to a point it undoubtedly is... but only up to a point. Our landscape is populated with people who, as someone said on the programme, "do not want answers. They want to perpetuate mysteries." (Another of my quotes in UFO STUDY). But the overall impression that speakers like this created was that such a view fairly reflects the whole of ufology (or American ufology for this was a programme of most relevance to that country). This is unjust. There is a widening chasm between serious ufologists (notably few and far between on this programme) and the image of serious ufologists conjured up by the skeptics (with which this show was decidedly top heavy). No real appreciation of such a fact came across to me, nor from media reviews to anyone else either!

The 55 minutes came in three parts with a curiously ill-fitting and fleeting glimpse at the work of Persinger and Brady, searching for proof of an atmospheric mind-scrambling plasma. Despite the strange assertion right at the end ("UFOs undoubtedly exist... But what are they?") this was the only concession to the school of thought that there might be something in the subject. For anyone who knew what was going on in the subject this was the only interesting bit... the rest was rather like reading a book for the fifteenth time. Of course, it would not seem that way to the man in the street... but the stress on negative implications was really too overpowering.

To begin with we had the Luke Air Force base movie film thrown at us, which was then promptly ignored. The panel of resident skeptics (James Oberg & Philip Klass... it resembling 'The Philip Klass Show' in parts) never even talked about that one (me thinks because they couldn't explain it!) This led on to a supposed explanation of why the US Air Force dropped UFOs, by way of showing one PROJECT BLUEBOOK case with a movie film of the moon 'supporting' it. One presumes the intention here was to make some vague psychological point, but the unfortunate implication was that all BLUEBOOK cases were like this - a blatant lie. We had no figures for how many went unexplained. No illustration of how inept the usual 'investigation' was. Incredibly, the on government funded attack on UFOs (the CONDON report) was never even mentioned. And where was GEPAN? The only current government sponsored UFO investigation was very noticeably absent. These omissions illustrate the bias of the programme.

Part Two was the bulk of the feature, where we entered the realms of modern investigation in the USA. We were treated to spectacular pictures of venus and ballons, given a grim warning about what lies in store with a fascinating and convincing film sequence of advertising planes. And we then got a lengthy diatribe about astronauts sightings that was quite irrelevant and should have had no part whatsoever in things.

* NB THE ITV OFFERING "THE FINAL FRONTIER" TACKLES UFOs ON WED NOV 3 4.45pm. (See P3)

NOV 1982...2

Similar ammounts of time were wasted on the Travis Walton fiasco. This and the astronauts commanded more than a third of the air time, although serious ufologists treat them with a lorry load of salt. If you add the great media hype based on a few squiggly blobs of light (ie the New Zealand movie films) then that was the sum total of the evidence presented for UFOs. No wonder it failed to convince anybody!

To me this was the tragedy of the whole affair. The UFO evidence was nothing like the 'best'. It was the 'best promoted', a rather different thing. The Luke Air Force Base case, the Sherrif Val Johnson car attack were mentioned (and then dismissed) but so much time was spent on the explainable stuff that they sunk in the swampy mires of obscurity. Any one of you could have come up with a hundred better cases based more of reliable testimony of an anomalous object. What happened to their research?

It was interesting to see how dubious the Walton story is. Or to see the astronaut 'sightings' duly demolished. And finally to have the self-inflated balloon of importance rapidly punctured for the Kaikoura lights. But the result was that far too many came away thinking... "Oh well. That's all there is to UFOs then. Yawn!" We know this is untrue. This was media ufology. Not the nitty gritty you and I deal with every day.

Had this necessary destruction of UFO myths been adequately balanced by the real 'hard stuff' (such as Lakenheath, the RB-47 case, the Newmill encounter... well name your own list) then I would have proudly placed HORIZON on a pedestal. For it did most other things right. But it failed dismally to show that ufology is not only nonsense. It drained the water down the plughole, but left the diamonds on the bottom of the bath whilst pontificating on the merits of dirty H₂O.

British ufology got its only mention here with David Simpson reminiscing about his 1970 Warminster hoax. His decision to call himself a 'Government Scientist' on the caption gave one or two people I have spoken to the impression his hoax was government backed. A dangerous untruth. My father asked me how I got fooled by him. Because nowhere was it made evident just how long ago this 'trick' occurred. Groom led Peter Warrington and I to believe that Simpson had admitted on film he could not do such an experiment today in view of better investigation technique. That got edited out, of course, and we poor British were left looking like ufological imbeciles. As BUFORAs Director of Investigations I had to fight damn hard not to take that personally, and to stay objective for the next three quarters of an hour. Simpson also frequently talks of other experiments, but this is the only one ever publicised. Until he comes up with the results of the others I am left susoecting we do not hear of them because they did not work. If they did, then share the results with us please. It is pointless if he fails to inform those his work is trying to improve. Or is he trying to improve standards? Maybe he just wants to make us look stupid.

After all this buccaneer sword-slashing the end of the programme rushed at us like an express train. We saw the full sequence of the Peter Day film, but with no information about it whatsoever. That case knods spots of any of the tripe we did get fed to the point of gluttony. But it was Allan Hendry who, thank God, slipped the net to bring some sanity to proceedings. He was the only broadminded and balanced person we saw. The only representative of true middle-ground, serious ufology. We saw too much of the two polarised camps who were throwing mud-pies at one another and having a jolly good time swopping fancy explanations (of one extreme or another). Meanwhile the phenomenon goes on all around them. According to this programme, Allan Hendry is the only person doing anything about it!

'The Case of the UFOs' was certainly the best UFO documentary yet produced. It badly reflected the bias of its producer (he refused to film Shirley McIver's work, for example, because 'she is a believer' and only came to Peter Warrington because he had 'been told that you were a skeptic') Given TV's limitations it was as good as we might expect. But I cannot help thinking of all those unanswered questions it never even posed.... I say to the BBC (probably forlornly)... OK, you have made a darn good programme about what UFOs are not. How about the sequel... what they might be??

PS: This publication is not part of the "UFO believers literature" (quoth HORIZON)

NEWS :: Granville Oldroyd writes of Nigel Watson's recent series on 1913 Airships in THE UNEXPLAINED. He is concerned that readers might extract data of the York case (Feb 22) when the general conception of this (and the Sketty & Liverpool cases) is that they are misidentifications of venus and clouds.

:: SSPR Meeting Wed DEC 1 8.00pm Fat Cat Pub, Alma St, city centre SHEFFIELD
Lecture on healing by Mr Kilby, a practitioner. All welcome.

NOV 1982...3

THE FINAL FRONTIER... I will write more of this next issue, after you have had chance to see it (those who have videos, or who are home at tea-time) But the 10 minute UFO spot, written for children, will hopefully act as a nice antidote to HORIZON. At least it tries to be both sceptical and yet recognise the fundamental reality behind UFOs.

"Bringing UFOs down to earth" EARTHLIGHTS, Devereux, P Turnstone Press, £9.95

Some books about UFOs you can read, perhaps enjoy, and then put them down saying ...Yes, well alright, but I've heard it all before. This is not such a book.

EARTHLIGHTS is a major work. It should be read by every experienced and serious researcher. That is not to say its content is wholly plausible. I found the end result vaguely disconcerting, but on the road to the end there is much of great importance which is eloquently discussed.

Paul Devereux is, of course, primarily an earth mysteries researcher, editor of THE LEY HUNTER and distinguished author in this field. This influence shows (I fear too strongly). At some points the author seems to strain to make his theory fit what little we know about megalith builders and prehistoric civilisation. This appears rather forced and a good deal of valuable space is spent on the distraction. Now, I do not say that the origins of stone circles are uninteresting. Nor was I left unfascinated by speculations about the powers and prowess of our British ancestors. I would even concede that he may be on the (old straight) track of something! Perhaps the ancients did recognise UFO phenomena as sources of energy (without necessarily understanding them) and so built their circles where they did, using the stones that they did, to channel this power into some facility... in the process investing the ancient sites with great religious significance. But this discordant and divergent line of approach seemed out of place in this book, which otherwise concentrates on strictly scientific principles. It forms the part of another work entirely that maybe should have followed on after EARTHLIGHTS. True as it very well may be, it tends to dilute the impact of the very persuasive arguments made elsewhere. I only hope that people will 'see the join' and appreciate the basis of Paul's primary thrust. For that is what makes this book truly important.

He begins with a personal 1967 UFO experience which fits his later theory rather well. It is a source of great wonder to me what would have happened had his sighting been of a more obviously structured UFO and not one that easily fits the term UAP. But then here lies the subjectivity factor within the phenomenon. He discusses and seems to believe that Peter Warrington and I went overboard in UFOs: A British Viewpoint. After several pages considering our ideas he finally concludes that none-witness subjectivity is much more crucial than witness subjectivity... 'I have seen a UFO, You have not... So I know what I am talking about'. There is some merit in this. I tend to agree that British Viewpoint went a little to the extreme, but in doing so perhaps highlighted where the real premises should lie. That is you only find your favourite Chinese restaurant by driving down the street past it and then turning round to go back.

From this personal anecdote the argument builds nicely, and the reader (despite having to battle through a fair number of typographical errors) finds himself facing a very satisfying theory... up to a point.

On pp 81-82 Paul makes the curious assertion that Jenny Randles "clearly wants to believe... that after subjective factors and misperceptions of known objects have been taken out of the situation there may be no objective UFO phenomenon at all." This wildly erroneous presumption bemuses me, because he has just spent a good deal of time discussing British Viewpoint, where Peter and I suggest that:-

- a) A natural physical phenomenon of unknown origin exists and should be renamed a UAP (Unidentified Atmospheric Phenomenon)
- b) Close encounters involve the psychokinetic manipulation of matter by the focal witness, changing its shape and moulding it into an experience which fits their subjective beliefs (but matter, of course, is physical!)

Paul Devereux not only seems to accept this, but his final theory is rather akin to the one above (with some admittedly significant new features). So if I am denying an objective basis to the UFO phenomenon (a concept I find rather silly in view of all that I have written over the years) then presumably Paul must be doing this too.

I do not wish to create the impression that this book half-inches the theory which Peter and I set out in British Viewpoint. In truth he has done a most exciting thing. He has effectively demonstrated where UFOs (or actually UAPs) come from. This, and its merger with the psychokinetic theory (which to an extent Peter and I half-inched from Vallee, Clark & Coleman et al) is what really makes this book live up to its high flying press blurb... where it is described as a "landmark in UFO literature"

The book discusses in some detail the work of Persinger and Lafreniere in Canada and Brady in the USA, researching how the piezo-electric effect may result from stress in underground faults, thus ionising the atmosphere and generating moving plasmas that are viewed as UFOs. The theory has been gaining a slow foothold in recent years. But Devereux has here worked it into a coherent system. He explains much. Solid lightbeams, for example. Not as 'beams' from the UFO to the earth, but as streams of ions feeding energy from the earth to the plasma. However, I do not share his total enthusiasm at the correlations he tries to show between fault lines and UFO events. There is a general fit. But on a map of Dyfed, south Wales, for example (p.191) the connection between scattered UFO sightings and fault lines is suggestive. But from the mass of faults that are present I would have expected a better degree of comparison than what we see.

There are a few gaps in his reasoning that trouble me too. He argues that fault lines and intrusive minerals (which geologically speaking tend to go together) both concentrate in the north and west of Britain. This is true. He then shows how stone circles fit the same area, there being hardly any in the SE. He leaps from this to a direct connection...when I keep wondering whether it might be indirect.

Think on this. If we draw a chart showing temporal distribution of conception (based on a 9 month deduction from childbirth), and plot against this ambient temperature, we might find a correlation. In cold weather children are conceived, when it grows warmer they tend to be less so. Seeing this some bright spark might say..."Aha! There is clearly a direct relationship here. Increase in ambient temperature inhibits fertilisation" That may look sensible...except that we know the most likely reason for such a link would be that on cold nights couples tend to go to bed early to save energy, and tend to cuddle up to each other, and...well you know the rest! A third factor has intervened.

In the case of connecting fault lines and stone circles the connecting factor might be the mountainous regions which go with the faults. There could be a good reason why ancient people chose high ground for their sites. I am not saying this is true or that Paul is necessarily wrong. But he tends to make fairly sweeping presumptions. For example, he dismisses contact cases as another phenomenon all together (perhaps with justification) and then says..."I feel that all types of UFO appearance can be explained under the umbrella of a single concept"...ie his earth energy, with psychokinesis from shamanistic witnesses moulding it like putty into solid discs, aliens (or ghosties, ghoulies, fairies, elves and so on) This is a dangerous leap from an other wise solid precipice. But he might well have landed on the far side of the canyon.

As will already be evident I could fill this magazine by discussing the book, and the wealth of thought it triggers is indication of its importance. I am unhappy with parts of it. His statistical data base seems shaky (800 BUFORA reports of dubious standard, especially in the early years, and with who knows how many IFOs in there) But the book is bold and forward looking. It is all that is good about the subject right now.

I suspect that Paul Devereux is very largely correct. I am reasonably sure his earthlights do exist. I am of the opinion that we now have a testable theory which we ought to work darned hard to try to prove (or disprove) to the satisfaction of science. For that is what ufology is all about. Maybe Paul has gone off at a tangent. Maybe his argument is stretched at times like a rubberband losing its elasticity. But at the very least he has shown us the way. And, as such, you cannot afford to fail to read this book.

POSTSCRIPT...The Earth has the final word!

I read EARTHLIGHTS the week before taking an unexpected five-day break at Paul (Whetnall)'s family caravan. This is at Llandrillo, a tiny Welsh village in the Berwyn mountains discussed in the book (and in my forthcoming UFO REALITY) because of a strange and relevant USP event there in 1974. On October 5 Paul and I had talked about the power of the mountains over breakfast. At 10.33 am I was washing up and looking at a hill in the WSW by the River Dee I saw a tall spire of white mist rising. I do not think it was smoke. It came from trees in the middle of the mount. Half thinking of the book I said to myself 'I'll see if I can change it into a man' And it did appear to alter shape in this way before fading away. Paul smiled and told me it was smoke or mist (the weather was cold and damp but the low cloud was well clear of the top of the hill). It was probably nothing, but it was a little odd to see the way it reinforced my beliefs (just as the fortuitous Todmorden earth

NOV 1982...5

in April came just as I was writing the end of PENNINE UFO MYSTERY - adding a perfect finale right on cue!) It was even weirder, though, to see what followed immediately after my misty earthlight. A Tornado jet flew low right over the spot and ducked above the hill-line. I looked round at Paul (he telling me that this was pure coincidence...military planes are common here). The radio was on. Stevie Wonder was singing a song apparently called "Ribbon on the sky". He might have been talking about what I had just seen! I'll send a report to Paul D - just to make sure!

INVESTIGATIONS

LOW DEFINITION

1979: 156 NOV 23 07.20 Speke, Merseyside MUFORA Lev C
43 yr old toolsetter going to work saw a green solid ball estimated size of bus. Left a vapourous trail same size as its diameter. It flew across a road of traffic below rooftop height in a slow, steady path. Duration .5 seconds plus. Weather drizzly. This sounds like an excellent observation of ball lightning.

1982: 23 AUG 21/22 22.30 Northampton, Northants R.Shaw BUFORA A
Two separate sightings of groups of Y/W LITS seen by children moving across sky. Evakuated by investigator as part of the bright Perseid meteors.

1982: 24 AUG 22 22.25 Bradford, W Yorks N.Mortimer B
14 yr old saw two W LITS that grew larger and pulsed as they floated slowly to earth. It is so similar to the report above, and corresponds in time, that this too would seem to be the meteor...although witness estimates duration as over a minute.

1982: 25 AUG 24 22.10 SCOTLAND S.Campbell BUFORA C
Separate reports from east Lothian & Fife of a round/oval greenish white seen heading SW for a few seconds. Evakuated as another bright Perseid fireball.

1982: 26 AUG 28 20.00 Scunthorpe, Humberside N.Watson B
Thirty minutes after seeing two identical suns (one on top of each other) on the horizon, a couple, plus two other witnesses, observed a tennis ball sized object whizz past a window by which they stood. Descriptions include "a toy gyroscope" and "a butterfly stuck to a ball" but none saw it for more than a fleeting glimpse. One witness argues (reasonably) that it was probably a group of flying insects.

1982: 27 OCT 14 07.00 East SCOTLAND Press Reports
Many people saw a "blazing aircraft" moving very fast W-E. Others saw it as a rocket shape with a trail of sparks. This could be debris re-entry from a satellite or (as proposed by the Edinburgh Observatory) another bright fireball.

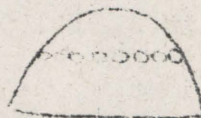
On the subject of fireball events...with which we seem to have been unduly plagued of late...I quote from a letter dated Oct 17 1982 from investigator Andy Collins; "Thought you might like to log a spectacular fireball I was privileged to see earlier this evening...At 19.50 exactly I was driving along a road at Rawreth, Essex, when in the east I saw a green intense light, descending at great speed in a diagonal course towards the ground. Within it was a red pulsating mass which flashed some three times in the three second duration of the phenomenon. It petered out like a firework rocket before reaching the horizon. It left me in a state of extreme excitement...Yet I know it was a fireball. I can readily recall a number of cases where exactly the same type of thing was seen..."

1982: 28 OCT 15 21.00 Ilkley, W Yorks N.Mortimer D
Nigel and his wife describe a personal experience involving a brilliant white LITS which Susan Mortimer describes as "like a very large star". This appeared to play tag with them, stopping as soon as they moved and then shooting off when they stopped. Nigel estimates it was the size of a one pence at arms length and at 3000'. It also looked to rotate and sparkle and glisten as it did so. It continued to tag them or "watch them", as Susan put it, for 2/3 minutes. They then decided to go to somewhere offering a more open aspect. They ran there but the UFO was nowhere to be seen in the clear sky, filled with stars. An aircraft did come over from another part of the sky, but was nothing like the UFO. Nigel called Leeds/Bradford airport who identified the a/c but had no other traffic to explain the UFO. The next morning (Oct 16) 3/4 army helicopters flew low over the area where Nigel & Susan had been. He is trying to discover more about the reasons for this.

MEDIUM DEFINITION CASES begin over the page...

1954: Mid NOV 14.00 Carlisle, Cumbria MUFORA Lev B
 Same witness as to case 79-156 describes an experience whilst at his passing out parade from the Army's Border Regiment. He was standing stiffly to attention as a military band marched by to mark the occasion. The sky was deep blue. Suddenly he was distracted by a glint in the sky above the castle wall. He blinked, but it was still there, hovering and spinning. It was like two interlinked chains that were silvery, seemingly polished metal. The spinning was evident despite the lack of marks because of the sun's reflection. Maintaining his posture he kept averting his eyes to watch the UFO, still hovering. After about 5 mins it began to move directly away, growing smaller and smaller. After 4/5 seconds it was gone. Later he discovered that several fellow soldiers had seen it and were talking about it excitedly. Some said they had seen windows in it. Oct/Nov 1954 was the time of a great European wave.

1980: MAY 03 00.30 Fort William, Scotland S. Campbell C
 Hairdressing salon owner and her husband had watched the late film when they saw an orange object in the SE over Glen Nevis. It drifted slowly up the glen, giving them time to wake their son, put on dressing gowns and go out with binoculars to see it pass over the moors. It was dome like with a flashing white light on top (through binoculars this was actually seen to be rotating). It came straight above their heads and displayed a triangular underside. Again thanks to the binoculars the orange light was seen to emerge from three triangular sections or panels. The thing moved to the NW where it picked up speed suddenly and then shot off out of sight. There was no sound at all. UNEXPLAINED.



1980: NOV 07.00 Fort William, Scotland S. Campbell C
 A different report from the same town. A woman saw a bright white LITS, like venus, over the hills. She called her husband and they watched for 10 mins as the object climbed in jerks, pausing to hover, and then moved off fast to the north. Through binoculars it looked like a bright ball surrounded (Saturn-like) by a girdle of pulsating white lights. Stuart suggests it might be a ball lightning effect. What about a search and rescue helicopter operation? Insufficient data.

1982: MAR 19 24.00 Barton-U-Needwood, Staffs P. Shuttleworth A
 This UFO report refers to the alleged sighting of two witnesses concerning a cigar shaped object the size of a golf ball at arms length which had a row of blue lights along its edge. It was seen very briefly (for 3 seconds only). Investigation suggests this might have been a meteor... but there are several inconsistencies in the testimony which may further point to the possibility of a hoax.

1982: APRIL 23.30 Cumbernauld, Scotland T. O'Neill C
 This independent report has some interesting comparisons with the Fort William case above. It concerns the observation of a UFO that appears repeatedly over this town. The witness, a housewife, has seen it several times and on this occasion her husband was witness as well. The object was first detected as a flashing mass of orange light shining through the curtains. Going into the garden it was visible as a ball which was radiating bursts of orange, apparently stationary. By the time her husband came out to join her it was moving at some speed towards Glasgow and the orange light had been replaced by a sparkling yellow light. In all it was visible for some 2/3 minutes and was the apparent size of a diving bell. From repeated close observation the dome shape has been seen to have some effect (and the witness refers to one close approach where the UFO terrified a local couple by hovering over their garden). There is allegedly structured panels on the side which slide like shutters to enclose the orange light within and make the yellow light on top more prominent. The woman who made this report to Tam O'Neill now tells us she has a loaded camera at the ready and is determined to snap a picture of it next time it shows up! This repeated UFO plus orange light is in fact rather akin to what became known as 'The Rossendale Anomaly' a mystery story which was fortuitously solved (to a point) after five years of investigation by MUFORA. It is possible that the above case might relate as Glasgow did play a part in the Rossendale happenings (the full story of which is told in several chapters of THE PENNINE UFO MYSTERY, published by Granada next Spring)

